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" Undoubtedly, no report could spread through the kingdom, relative to any stoppage in the Distillery, " which would not immediately SINK the price of barley." — MR. ARTHUR YOUNG's Evidence before the Committee.

" The price of barley has RISEN in consequence of the sitting of the Committee, and the discussion of the " intended measure for stopping the distilleries."——MR. COKE, MR. FOSTER, MR. PONSONBY, SIR " HENRY MILDMAY, &c. &c. Speeches in the House of Commons.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

CORN AGAINST SUGAR.——This question, after having gone through a pretty good discussion out of doors, has, at last, come before the House of Commons, upon a motion of LORD BINNING, made on Thursday, the 19th instant, to refer the report of the select committee to a committee of the whole House.——Upon this motion the House, after a long debate, divided; for it 122, against it 108; of course, there was a majority of 14 for going into the Committee.—— This subject, owing to the principles that it involves, is of great and singular public importance; and, owing to the discussion having been conducted free from considerations of *party*, that discussion is worthy of the attention of the public. It must be interesting, too, to hear what has been said in parliament upon a matter respecting which so much has been said elsewhere; and therefore I shall here insert an account of the debate, as I find it given in the newspapers; for, though the report of the speeches will not be found here nearly so full nor so correct as it will be found in the regular Parliamentary Debates, yet, the substance of the greater part of what was said may be collected, and it is necessary that whatever observations present themselves to me should, to answer any useful purpose, be made without delay.——" LORD BINNING rose pur- " suant to the notice he had given some time " ago, to make a motion on the subject of " the Distilleries. Previous to moving that " the house should go into a committee, he " would explain the nature of the Resolu- " tions he meant to offer in that committee, and the nature and causes of the " changes made in those Resolutions since " he had first announced them. The topics " involved in the Report were important " and momentous, and the highest authori- " ties differed among themselves upon the " principal points. The committee was ap- " pointed in the first instance to consider " of the means of affording relief to the " West India proprietors and merchants, " and the order, under which the committee " assembled, directed the committee to in- " quire, whether the most immediate and " effectual means of relief would not be to " confine the Distilleries to the use of Sugar " and Molasses alone. In the course of this " inquiry, it became necessary to ascertain " how far the agriculture of the country " would be affected by such a restriction, " and this investigation led to the knowledge " of facts, which established the wisdom " and necessity of the restriction, exclusive of " all consideration whatsoever of the interests " of the West India Islands. It was impossible " to separate the two questions; but this he " would say, that neither he nor the com- " mittee could have recommended the Re- " solutions they had done, if the interest of " the country, distinct from those of the " West India proprietors, had not, in the " opinion of the committee, rendered such " measures necessary. The committee find- " ing that this country was generally depen- " dent for a sufficient supply of corn and " flour upon foreign countries, and that this " supply was cut off in the present state of " Europe, without any prospect of a suffi- " cient resource in the last year's crop of " this country, thought it right as a precau- " tion against famine to stop the distillation " from corn, with a view to a more ample " and satisfactory supply of sustenance for " the people. Here the noble lord went in- " to a statement of the quantity of corn im- " ported into G. Britain annually, and con- " tended, that the saving, by the prohibition " of the Distilleries, would be 470,000 qrs. " which would cover more than half the de- " ficiency created by the stoppage of impor- " tation, and more than the whole importa- " tion of oats. Under these circumstances " it seemed right to suspend the distillation " from corn, with a discretionary power to " the privy council, to extend or to put an " end to the restriction as circumstances " may require. This was the substance of

" the Resolutions of the committee, resolu-
" tions which they never would have come
" to on account of the West India mer-
" chants, if the circumstances of the times
" had not rendered them necessary with a
" view to the general interests of the coun-
" try. He argued on the principle, that the
" distress of one class of the community
" ought not to be remedied by burthening
" another class. But he denied the applica-
" tion of the principle in the present in-
" stance. The sufferings of the West India
" merchants were great; but the relief here
" proposed went directly to remedy the dis-
" tress present or eventual of the country,
" and relieved the distress of the West India
" proprietors only collaterally. G. Britain
" imported annually on an average 770,000
" qrs. of grain from foreign countries. From
" some of these countries importation was
" now impossible. From America, in con-
" sequence of the embargo, corn could not
" now be received, and there was no pros-
" pect of the impediment being speedily re-
" moved. The supply of last harvest was
" not sufficiently abundant to have a surplus
" fund that might be relied on. The stock
" on hand was far short of the probable de-
" mand. In the south of England the crop
" was abundant, in other parts it was not.
" The crop of wheat was in general good,
" the crop of barley was short, and that of
" pulse good for nothing. [Here the noble
" lord cited the evidence of the witnesses
" before the committee, beginning with
" Mr. A. Young, in order to establish that
" the general crop of last year was short, and
" the supply in the country insufficient.]
" The stoppage of distillation from grain
" would be adequate to the importation of
" 470,000 qrs. In the present circumstan-
" ces it seemed essential to divert so large a
" supply from luxury to necessity. It was
" objected to the measure, that it laid down
" a bad precedent, tending to encourage the
" perpetual interference of parliament in
" such cases. But the circumstances of the
" present case were peculiar, and unless the
" same identical circumstances existed, the
" precedent could not apply. It was said
" the quantity of grain to be sown next year
" would be diminished by the stoppage.
" But the quantity to be sown depended on
" the prices, and the present prices were far
" from being low. Instead of falling, they
" had risen since the present measure had
" been announced. Here the noble lord
" cited accounts of prices sent to him, which
" shewed a continued rise in the price of
" corn in the last two weeks. In Scotland
" in particular, the accounts stated that the
" distillers had determined to stop whether
" there was a provision to that effect or not.
" If the business could have been conve-
" niently gone into last night, he was pre-
" pared to offer a resolution for restricting
" distillation from corn for 12 months from
" July 1, 1808; with permission to the
" king and council to do away that restric-
" tion whenever an abundant crop should
" render it adviseable or safe so to do. Un-
" derstanding, however, that a number of
" the most formidable opponents of the
" measure might be conciliated by delay
" and representation, and that substantial
" good might be done with less difficulty by
" affording the means of private arrange-
" ment, he had put off his motion till this
" day. This was the sole cause of the delay,
" which was entirely distinct from minister-
" rial motives. The object of attaining the
" same good with unanimity, was with him
" most important. He had therefore made
" the adjournment from yesterday, and he
" had also made some changes in the Reso-
" lutions he intended to propose, which he
" had reason to think would render them
" more generally acceptable. It had been
" objected by the Irish gentlemen, that the
" Report of the Committee, by proposing
" to prohibit the importation of Irish spirits
" into England, went to a violation of the
" articles of union. As nothing could be
" further from his wish, than to interfere
" with this compact in the slightest degree,
" this prohibition was to be now omitted.
" The first Resolution he meant now to
" propose, was, that after the 1st of July, and
" thence to the 1st of Oct. next, all distilla-
" tion from corn, grain, flour, meal, pota-
" toes, and bran, should cease throughout
" the United Kingdom; and 2dly, that it
" should be lawful for his majesty in coun-
" cil, after the 1st Sept. to continue the re-
" striction till 40 days after the commence-
" ment of the next session of parliament.
" Thus, if the ensuing harvest should be a
" good one, the restriction might expire at
" once; if it should not, his majesty might
" continue the restraint till parliament
" should provide such remedy as its wisdom
" may think fit. It was intended also to re-
" duce the duty on wash made from sugar.
" These provisions, it was proposed, should
" be extended to Ireland. But as his in-
" formation on the state of that part of the
" United Kingdom was not so complete, he
" would leave the details of the arrange-
" ments, so far as Ireland was concerned, to
" be afterwards settled and explained. He
" understood, however, that government
" had received information from Ireland,

" stating it to be adviseable to stop the dis-
" tilleries at present. If after the ensuing
" harvest Ireland had a superabundance, this
" country or Scotland could not fail to afford
" a vent for that surplus. With respect to
" the West India part of the measure, he
" did not think it right now to enter into
" details. The committee continued to
" employ itself sedulously on devising the
" means of remedying the distresses under
" which the West India interest unhappily
" laboured. The distress of the West India
" interest was urgent, undeniable, and se-
" vere. Many who had been till lately
" opulent, were now in a state of distress,
" and the most wealthy were in curtailed
" circumstances. The supplies sent out to
" work the estates were still as expensive as
" ever. The present distress of the West
" India interest arose, not from wild specu-
" lation, but from the shutting of the con-
" tinental market; a mischief which Eng-
" land had brought on the colonies, and was
" therefore in a particular degree called
" upon to relieve and remedy. The ques-
" tion now before the house was, however,
" purely a British question. The relief to
" the West India interest was merely inci-
" dental to the primary object of providing
" a security against the apprehension of
" scarcity in G. Britain. That this relief to
" the West India interest could be inciden-
" tally introduced, was a great additional
" recommendation of the measure he in-
" tended to propose. If the restriction was
" necessary as a measure of precaution, it
" could not too soon be carried into effect.
" If it was not, the dispute could not be
" too soon put to rest. He moved that the
" report be referred to a committee of the
" whole house, and he anticipated from the
" moderation and the good sense of the
" gentlemen present, that the wishes of the
" committee would be carried into effect."—
" Mr. Coke (of Norfolk) agreed that this
" question ought to be set at rest. He was
" sorry to observe a practice of suspending
" the statute of Wm. and Mary, which was
" the best security of the agriculture of this
" country, by affording the means of dispo-
" sing of the surplus produce. The brewe-
" ries and distilleries took off this surplus.
" If their use of corn was stopped, the de-
" mand must be lessened, the price must
" fall, and the growth and supply must of
" course be diminished. The landed gen-
" tlemen did not seek to maintain corn at
" the highest possible price. All they sought
" was a sure sale and a saving price, without
" which the land would not be cultivated.
" The price this year was low till this com-
" mittee had commenced its inquiries. It
" had recently risen in consequence of the
" agitation produced by the investigation of
" the committee. The report itself allow-
" ed, that every permanent interference
" with the present established system of
" agriculture was injurious; and it express-
" ed great reluctance at adopting even a
" temporary restraint. [Here the hon. gent.
" entered into a detail of the management
" of barley farms] In this species of cul-
" ture, and that of wheat, an increase of
" one-fourth had taken place within 15
" years. The importation had proportion-
" ably diminished, and the fluctuation of
" the price of corn had materially lessened.
" The measure went to check the establish-
" ed system and do away the progressive
" improvement. With respect to the West
" India planters, he doubted whether they
" stood in need of relief. The demand for
" sugars had lately increased so much as to
" create an advance of 6s. per cwt. on one ar-
" ticle. This demand had arisen from expor-
" tation. The distress of the West India planters
" had no claim upon parliament any more than
" that of any other class of men,—the Staf-
" fordshire potters for instance. A propo-
" sition of the same nature as the present
" had been brought forward in Mr. Pitt's
" time. But it was found the revenue
" would suffer materially from it, and it
" was given up. Was the chancellor of the
" exchequer prepared to say this measure
" would not hurt the revenue, or was he
" prepared with a remedy for the defalca-
" tion? The land was already sufficiently
" burthened with land-tax, property-tax,
" and tythes, and it might be expected that
" gentlemen would not go out of their way
" to burthen it, for the West India planters.
" He was sure the West India interest was
" at the bottom of this measure; for till
" their distress was represented as so severe,
" this measure was never thought of. He
" had no objection to the stoppage of the
" use of grain in the distilleries, if it should
" be necessary. The government ought to
" have the discretion to impose or to re-
" move this restriction when corn should
" come to a certain price indicative of scar-
" city or of abundance."——" Sir W.
" Curtis avowed himself a friend to the
" agricultural interests of the country, and
" denied that they were at all injured by
" the present measure, the policy of which
" was more than adequate to counteract
" every other objection."——" Sir John
" Sinclair said that he might have less ob-
" jection than he had to the present mea-
" sure, if he could be assured that it was

" founded upon a system of general policy, " and not local interest; for he was there " not as a man locally interested by the " views of any particular place, or any one " set of men, but as one of the members of " parliament for the United Kingdom, and " as such he could not see any advantage to " be derived from the substitution proposed, " but did apprehend a great deal of mischief. " The hon. baronet then adverted to the " great advantage that resulted to the reve- " nue from the grain distillery, and asked, " whether with all this profit from the land- " holders, besides the property tax and " others, it was a wise or a just measure to " throw any obstacle in the way of the cul- " tivation of land, and to diminish its pro- " duce? With respect to the sugar distil- " lery, great as the injury would be to the " landed interest, this boon would be pro- " ductive of very little advantage to the " growers of sugar. The high price of bar- " ley and other grain in Scotland was part- " ly owing to the great quantities that had " been bought and distilled there, from an " apprehension of this prohibition of distil- " lation from grain. As to what had been " said about the advantage which this prohi- " bition would prove to the people, he ob- " served, that he was of a totally different " opinion, and in this he was supported by " very high authority on the subject. As to " the stoppage of foreign importation, he " hoped that we might soon have an oppor- " tunity of importing from America, as we " already might from our own colonies in " the north of that continent. But besides " this, the measure might be made use of " as a precedent for interference with the " production of corn, a thing which it was " most important to guard against. If any " rational plan of relief could be proposed " for the West India interests, he would " gladly concur in it. But he could not " consent that they should thus be relieved " at the expense of a particular class of the " community. The apprehension of such a " measure as this had excited the greatest " alarm throughout the country; and it was " important in every point of view that it " should not receive the sanction of the le- " gislature."—" MR CURWEN gave credit " to the noble lord, for the manner in which " he had brought it forward; but asked " how he had come to change his opinion, " and swerve from the Report in one day? " However, he would not argue from the " Report, but take the proposition as it now " stood. With respect to the lodging these " discretionary powers in the crown, he " thought that this system was attended " with very bad effects, and he was by no " means fond of the idea of encouraging " the practice. In order to shew that the " country might be sufficiently supplied " with grain, he adverted to the excellent " effects that had resulted from Mr. Wes- " tern's act by the increase of agriculture. " He was a wise minister that assented to " that act, and resisted the clamour raised " against it at the time. Though the im- " mediate effect of that might have been to " raise the price of corn, yet the ultimate " effect was to render it cheaper, as it ena- " bled the landholder to raise corn upon " those acres upon which none could other- " wise have been produced. He mention- " ed, as another reason, the improvement " in the breed of cattle, by which in Scot- " land, and other places, double the quanti- " ty of meat was produced, with the same " quantity of animal provisions, so that much " less land was necessary for pasture, and " more was left for the production of grain, " of which the prices had never before been " so regular. In Devizes, and other places in " the neighbourhood, more grain had been " stored up than ever had been known at " any former period; and the present rise " in the price of grain was owing to the " alarm of the distillers, who had been buy- " ing up, and distilling as much of it as pos- " sible, from an apprehension of this mea- " sure. Still, however, if the proposition " had come from the chancellor of the ex- " chequer, or any responsible minister of " the crown, he would not have been so " much inclined to persist in objecting to " a discretionary power of stopping the dis- " tillation from grain, if the circumstances " of the country should require it, without " reference to the case of the West India " planters. But as the proposition came " from the noble lord it must be considered " as founded on the Report of the commit- " tee, which had been appointed for the " specific purpose of examining what me- " thod of relief could be adopted for the " planters. If this discretionary power was " required with the view of affording such " relief, and not solely to be directed by the " circumstances of the country, abstracted " from this consideration, the interests of " agriculture must be shaken to the centre, " without much benefit to the colonies. If, " by the contest in which we were engaged, " many should be turned from commercial " to agricultural pursuits, it would be such a " source of strength to the country, that so " far from its proving fatal to us, we might " come out of it in a better condition than " before. He mentioned as a proof of this

" the great improvement that had taken " place in the agricultural system of Nor- " folk, by which every 7th acre was employ- " ed in raising winter food for cattle— " in other places not more than the one- " hundredth. If the same plan should be " adopted in other places, a sufficient quan- " tity of meat would be produced to afford " half a pound of meat a day to 10 millions " of people."——" Mr. Marryatt could " not agree with those who thought that " the interests of the West India planters " were to be thrown entirely out of consi- " deration, and maintained that a case of " the utmost distress had been made out by " them. When the account of the Ameri- " can embargo arrived, he, along with " others, as a deputation from the West In- " dia committee, waited on the chancellor " of the exchequer to ask, whether govern- " ment would consent that the restrictions " on the exportation of corn to the colonies " would be taken off? And upon this being " refused, it was suggested that sugar might " be substituted for grain in the distilleries, " as this would be only relieving them with " the money that was sent to be paid to fo- " reigners for corn. It ought to be remem- " bered that in former committees on this " subject, the plan went to the breweries " and to the distillation of molasses; at " present it went no farther than the distil- " leries and distillation from sugar; so that " the measure was much simplified, and " the financial difficulties in a great measure " got rid of. It ought also to be kept in " view, that the committee still continued " its labours, and had a report in forward- " ness pointing out a permanent plan of re- " lief, by which any recourse to this mea- " sure in future would be rendered unneces- " sary. He denied that the system of agri- " culture would be deranged, for the crop " of this year was in the ground, and before " the next year's crop could come in, the " measure would have answered its pur- " pose, and of course cease. He also de- " nied that the general interests of the coun- " try would be at all injured, since the " quantity of corn thrown into the market " would be so much less than what had " been commonly imported. The hon. ba- " ronet opposite had not sufficiently distin- " guished between the effects of a tempora- " ry and a permanent measure. He allow- " ed that if the plan was to be permanent, " it would be injurious, but no such thing " was in contemplation. If agriculture had " increased, the population must have kept " pace with it, for the importations had not " been at all diminished; and in the pre- " sent circumstances of the country we " ought not to trust entirely to a future har- " vest for making up the supply before de- " rived from foreign countries. While the " colonies take goods from the mother " country to the value of 6 millions, while " they paid 9 millions to the revenue, and " while the trade employed 20,000 seamen, " sugar had for the last 3 years been selling " at a price insufficient to support the ex- " pense of cultivation. He referred to the " official papers in the Report, in order to " shew the mistake of those who imagined " that too much sugar was raised. The glut " had been occasioned by the stoppage of the " foreign market, and the admission of the " sugar of the captured colonies into the " home market, contrary to the good faith " on which our own colonists had rested. He " further contended, that there was no in- " tention here to relieve one class at the " expense of another. The landholders " were in possession of an advantage which " the fortune of war had given them, and " they ought, out of that advantage, to allow " something to other subjects of the empire, " on whose interests the war had produced " an effect so injurious."——" General " Gascoyne had understood that the ques- " tion had been postponed yesterday, with a " view to some compromise, but what that " was he was yet to learn, for he saw from " the agricultural gentlemen nothing but " the most pointed opposition. But he " should like to know by whom that com- " promise was made, or who authorised it? " The committee was no party to such a " compromise, and the hon. member for " Norfolk had shewn no inclination to come " into the noble lord's proposition. But " after all the delusion, and all the clamour " that had been excited on this subject, " it appeared, after all, from what the " noble lord said, that the question was " to be discussed without reference to the " relief of the sugar planters! What had " the committee been appointed for but to " consider of a mode of affording them re- " lief? And was he now to abstain from " stating their distresses? The advocates " of the high price of provisions refused any " relief to the planters till a scarcity should " take place, when they would humanely " permit them to share the profits they derived " from the distress of the country. If the " planters were to be relieved only by the " calamity of the country, he wished they " might be long without relief. It had been " said that the colonies were well repre- " sented in parliament. How did that ap- " pear? There never was any objection to

" profit by the high duties imposed on their " produce. They were valuable as a sub- " ject of taxation; but when they became a " subject of legislation, then they were de- " graded as well as injured, as in the in- " stance of the bill that passed two years ago. " After stating the impossibility that the co- " lonies could keep up the competition in " the foreign market with the Americans, " who supplied the enemy with the sugar " of their own colonies, the hon. gen. ad- " verted to the opinion of the representative " of the county of Norfolk, that the sitting " of the committee had raised the price " of grain. He affirmed, on the contrary, " that had it not been for the sitting of the " committee, the price would have been dou- " ble *(a loud laugh)*—he meant of course, " that the rise would have been double. The " distress of the colonies was not only severe, " but urgent, and the admission of grain in- " to the distilleries was the only mode of ear- " ly relief, and if this was denied at the " end of the session, all the previous proceed- " ings could only be considered as a tub " thrown out to amuse the planters." " ——Mr. Chute did not intend, when " he came into the house, to have said " any thing, but had resolved to leave the " discussion to those who could do the sub- " ject so much more justice. But he " could not avoid taking notice of the as- " persions which had been cast on the coun- " try gentlemen by the general under the " gallery—a thing the less to be surprised at " as coming from an avowed advocate of the " slave trade. The opposition to this mea- " sure, he observed, was founded on the " clearest and most solid principles, and he " most conscientiously joined in it. Trade " might suffer for a time, without any great " loss to the community, or affecting in a " material degree the general interests. But " it was far otherwise with agriculture: " when that was injured the whole country " must be injured with it. Nothing, there- " fore, ought to come into competition " with this great national object. This " measure, if passed, would derange the " agricultural system, and change the whole " method of cropping. The agricultural " interests ought not surely to pay for the " speculations of the colonists. On these " grounds he would oppose the measure. " With respect to the imputations of the ge- " neral under the gallery, he would leave " it to others to give him a detailed answer." —" Mr. James Fitzgerald would consi- " der the case on the evidence in the Re- " port, where it was recommended not to " extend the measure to Ireland—and yet " the noble lord, by his Resolutions, propo- " sed to apply it to the whole of the United " Kingdom. Many, he said, were not " aware to what extent the Resolutions " would go. It was to one paragraph in the " Report that he wished particularly to call " the attention of the house. He then read " the paragraph that stated the reasons for " not applying the measure to Ireland; and " observed, that in this the committee were " unanimous, and yet the noble lord came " forward and proposed, that the measure " should extend to Ireland, without men- " tioning any ground for this alteration, " Though gentlemen had been almost put " to the torture in order to extract evidence " from them that the measure might be ap- " plied to Ireland, yet the result was against " it. He would oppose the Speaker's leaving " the chair."—" The Chancellor of the " Exchequer observed, that gentlemen " had alluded to a compromise. He was " not aware of any such compromise, nor " had his noble friend, as far as he under- " stood him, affirmed that any had taken " place. If there had been any compro- " mise, and any discredit attached to it, the " hon. general had certainly shewn that he " was no party to it, and that none of the " dicredit would rest with him. He under- " stood his noble friend to have said, that " he had postponed his resolutions on the " former day, from an idea, arising from " the nature of the objections, that a trial " ought to be made whether the propositions " might not be so framed as to conciliate " gentlemen on both sides. But he certain- " ly had no recollection that his noble friend " pretended that he could compromise the " matter, or had he any authority to do so. " The hon. general had charged his noble " friend with having left the distress of the " sugar planters out of the question, though " the committee had been expressly appoint- " ed to devise a plan for their relief. He " did not think that his noble friend had de- " parted from the character or spirit of the " Report, for the measure was there recom- " mended only with a view to the diminish- " ed supply of corn, and a power was ac- " cordingly recommended to be vested in " the crown, to stop the suspension when " the continuance of it should be inconve- " nient or injurious to the agricultural inte- " rests, and not desirable with a view to pre- " vent a scarcity of food. If his noble " friend then felt that a notion prevailed, " that the design was to remunerate the " sugar planters, and to sacrifice the landed " to the West-India interest, was it not ex- " pedient that the thing should be placed on

" its true ground, and that it should be " stated, that, independent of the West- " India interest, there were good reasons " for the adoption of such a measure? That " was his view of the subject, and the view " of his noble friend, who had kept strictly " to the spirit of the Report. The hon. ge- " neral was, however, indignant at the de- " lay, and said, that from the 1st of July to " the 1st of Oct., the distilleries would be " stopped at any rate. But his noble friend " here again had only followed the spirit of " the committee's recommendation, for the " committee had proposed, that the suspen- " sion should commence from the 1st of Ju- " ly and continue till July the follow- " ing year, still leaving a discretionary " power with the crown. The proposition " of his noble friend, that the distillation " from sugar should commence on the 1st " of July, and continue till Oct., with a " discretionary power in the crown to con- " tinue it still further, till 30 days after the " meeting of the next session of parliament, " was in substance exactly correspondent to " the Report. (Gen. Gascoyne said across " the table, that he had understood that " the sugar was not to be substituted be- " tween July and Oct., except in a case of " scarcity). That, indeed, would have af- " forded some ground for the hon. general's " objection, but his noble friend had express- " ly stated that sugar was to be substituted, " and the hon. general might recollect that " he had mentioned his intention of propos- " ing a reduction of the duty on sugar wash, " in order to enable the distilleries to em- " ploy sugar with advantage. Another rea- " son for desiring an interval was to consider " how the difficulty, with respect to Ire- " land, could be got over. The hon. gent. " (Mr. Fitzgerald) who had expressed him- " self so strongly with regard to a recom- " mendation of the committee, which he " considered as an attempt to violate the " act of union, was hardly reasonable in " his objection to a compromise, by which " that difficulty was done away, and the " Resolution proposed in such a shape " as made it a common question with re- " spect to both countries. That this ren- " dered the proposition more difficult he al- " lowed; but when both countries were " united, and the trade in grain perfectly " free between them, it appeared that there " was no step that could be taken to save " the grain here that did not equally apply " to Ireland. When there was abundance " or scarcity in one country, they would be " equally felt in the other. If the prices " here were high, they must likewise be " high there, and *vice versa*, so that the " same measure of precaution ought to " apply to both. If this had been solely a " competition of interests, there was no " question the landed interest ought to have " the preference; but when another inte- " rest might be promoted without prejudice " to the landed interest, surely the propo- " sition could not be rejected, merely be- " cause a measure, expedient in itself, " might happen to afford relief to the sugar " planters. He agreed, therefore, that " the question ought not to be argued on " ground of relief to the West India plan- " ters; although that was not to be thrown " out of consideration entirely. He then " put it to the judgment of the house, " though fortunately there was not at pre- " sent a scarcity, yet, in the deficiency of " the means of supply, and the badness of " the crop, under the apprehension of a " possibly scarcity, and the foreign ports " shut against us, whether it was not wise " to provide beforehand against the effects " of these threatening appearances? Those " who put the question on the general " principle, did not argue fairly; for " the present was different from ordina- " ry cases, and hence the hon. baronet's " (sir J. Sinclair) arguments, though they " might apply very much to former times, " did not at all apply to our present situa- " tion. We had been an exporting, we " are now an importing, nation. The right " hon. gent. then adverted to the evidence of " Mr. Arthur Young, and others, and con- " tended that the case was clearly made out, " that the crop was deficient, and that it was " expedient to adopt some such measure as " the present. He denied that the high price " could possibly result from the agitation " of this question. The effect of that must " have been quite of a contrary description. " The cause was the scarcity in Scotland, " and the different crops in other places. It " would be improper to bring the measure " into operation sooner than the 1st of July " as the distillers ought to have time to dis- " pose of that grain which they had in such " a state that it could be applied to no other " purpose. He stated that the crop of po- " tatoes had failed in Ireland, and that by " the effect of this proposition the people " there would have other food cheaper. The " measure ought always to be considered as " a temporary one. He admitted that it " was his duty to take care of the revenue, " and that this was an important considera- " tion. But he believed that the revenue " would not suffer materially, and that the " difficulty of the collection in Ireland might

" be got over. He hoped, upon the whole, " that those gentlemen who objected to the " quarter from which the proposition came, " would dismiss from their minds, in con- " sidering the subject, every thing except " its real merits. This was the proper view " of it, and he hoped that no strenuous op- " position would be persisted in."—" Mr. " Ponsonby declared, that if he had not " read the resolutions proposed by the noble " lord, he would have voted for the motion " of going into the committee; but the " reading of these resolutions was suf- " cient to satisfy his mind as to the pro- " priety of an opposite course. The gen- " tlemen on the other side, he ob- " served, had taken quite different routes " to recommend the measure of the noble " lord. One had pleaded for it as necessary " to relieve the West India merchants, " while another contended that it was called " for in order to guard against scarcity. " To shew that the latter ground was " erroneous, the right hon. gent. entered " into a comparative statement of the prices " of corn, at various periods, particularly " in Ireland; and he also quoted several " passages from the evidence taken before " the committee to prove that this ground " was quite untenable. As to the relief " of the West India merchants, he was as " anxious for it as any man, but to the " mode now proposed, he strongly objected; " and, in particular, because he did not " think this mode could be effective."—— " Sir A. Wellesley asserted, that the peo- " ple of Ireland, and especially in the north, " were very much distressed for provisions, " which distress would, he maintained, " render a measure of this nature necessary, " whatever might be the state of the West " India merchants."—"Col. Montgomery " stated, that the scarcity of the potatoe " crops in that part of Ireland with which " he was acquainted, had been such last " year as to afford scarcely enough to spare " for the ordinary cultivation or seed. The " consequence therefore was to produce a " proportionable scarcity of corn, which " he thought the measure under conside- " ration calculated to alleviate, if not to re- " medy; therefore he should vote for it."— " Sir John Newport was surprized at the " statement, that the north of Ireland had " recently experienced any material want " of provisions, as the price of corn had " not been for several months at all fluc- " tuating, at one of the greatest ports for " the export of that article in Ireland; he " meant Waterford. If any scarcity ex- " isted in the north, he naturally concluded " that such scarcity would have affected " the price of corn at Waterford. He ge- " nerally deprecated the interposition of " the legislature upon subjects of this na- " ture. He thought such interposition, in " almost every instance, extremely noxious. " Indeed, experience had proved that no- " thing but imperious necessity could ex- " cuse it. To such interposition he believ- " ed it was owing that this country was " not able to grow sufficient food for " its population as it formerly did. " From the enactment of Mr. Parnell's " act to the present, the interposition he " deprecated was found injurious. As to " the rise which had recently taken place " in the prices of sugar and corn, it appear- " ed to him to proceed from the specula- " tions likely to arise out of the existence of " a committee upon this subject."—— " Mr. Foster stated, in the most un- " equivocal terms, that he meant to vote " in opposition to his colleagues. His " reasons were: in the 1st place, he " thought it to be contrary to all acknow- " ledged maxims of agriculture to say, " that we should prevent the use of grain " in one of its regular channels, merely " for the benefit of the West India colo- " nists; and in the 2d place, if there were " any ground for such a prohibition, it " ought to be shewn that the necessity of " adopting such a measure arose from the " dearth or scarcity of grain, or some just " cause for the apprehension that such a " case was likely to happen. The corn of " the country was by the wisest and most " experienced politicians left in general to " find its own level in the market, by the " usual means of competition among the " dealers. When there was a bad harvest, " and the price of grain advanced much " higher than usual, there were always per- " sons ready to import from foreign mar- " kets, and thus keep down the price whilst " they promoted their own interests. But " it never could be the interest of any state " to be disregardful of the interests of the " farmer, and not to leave him some open- " ing to dispose of the surplus of his crop. " These opportunities were first, in the sale " at the breweries and distilleries, and se- " condly, by exportation. He believed that " this was the first time in the English his- " tory, except in a time of scarcity, or the " apprehension of such an event, that ever " the legislature attempted thus to tamper " with the agricultural interests of the na- " tion. Besides that, he could not believe " that it was capable of affording any sub- " stantial relief to the West India merchants " or planters; and if the house once adopted " such a measure, and left such a precedent

" on their Journals, it was impossible to say " to what extent the mischief might be car- " ried hereafter. Gentlemen might say " what they pleased in that house upon the " subject, but their words would have no " effect upon the country at large; and the " precedent would appear upon their Jour- " nals without their arguments in support " of the measure, so that hereafter it might " be made use of, but on slighter grounds " even than those on which the present pro- " position stood. Agriculture was a busi- " ness that required most extraordinary " steadiness, more than almost any other " pursuits that mankind were engaged in; " and if the farmers were left without four " years steadiness in the law that was to " govern them, there would be no market, " comparatively speaking, for a redundant " crop, and no resource in time of scarcity. " In Ireland there was no steadiness in the " law upon this head until the year 1784. " The law was at that time fixed; and al- " most ever since they have been able to " send considerable supplies of grain annual- " ly to England In every point of view " that he could look upon the present sub- " ject, it left so strong an impression of its " impolicy on his mind, that he felt himself " bound to vote against the Speaker's leav- " ing the chair."—— " MR. WINDHAM de- " clared that the principles laid down by " the right hon. gent. who had just sat " down, and by another right hon. gen- " tleman (Mr. Ponsonby) need only be " heard, to carry conviction to the mind of " any dispassionate man. The committee, " however, had been instructed to consider " of the best means of affording relief to the " West India planters, and to consider of " that subject only, as it was imagined at " least; but all of a sudden, and most con- " veniently it seems for the wishes of the " gentlemen on the other side (all but the " chancellor of the exchequer for Ireland), " the idea of a scarcity in the country darts " upon their mind, something like Bayes's " army in disguise, and gives a new turn to " their proceedings. Really, whilst there " was such vaccillation of opinion, such un- " steadiness among their councils, there was " little or no hope left for confidence in fu- " ture. And, in fact, if there was any " thing like a scarcity in the country, the " very words of ministers that night " were calculated to spread an alarm and " add to the necessity."—— " LORD CAS- " TLEREAGH argued at considerable length, " to prove that barley and oats were at " present nearly double the price which " they were sold at in the years 1795 " and 1800, in London, and in some parts " of Ireland they were treble the price that " they were in these two years of remark- " able scarcity."—— " MR. JOHN SMITH " did not think the measure went far " enough."—— " SIR H. MILDMAY thought " it necessary to controvert the assertions of " the noble lord (Castlereagh), in order to " prevent the effect of any unfounded alarm " in the country, which might be the " consequence of his calculations if they " were not disproved."———It was easy to foresee, that very little of what was *new* could possibly be said upon the subject of this debate; and, accordingly, there does not appear, from this report, to have been one argument made use of, which had not before been run to the very lees. There are, however, some assertions and remarks that deserve to be particularly noticed. Mr. Coke said, that " there had been an increase of one-fourth in the produce of wheat within the last fourteen years." This was meant, I suppose, to shew that the land was capable of supplying all the wants of the people, without the aid of West India produce to be used in the distilleries. But, unfortunately for Mr. Coke, it is a fact not to be denied, that, during the last fourteen years, during the progress of this astonishing increase, the nation has been increasing its imports of corn, and that it has experienced more distress from scarcity than during a whole century preceding. If such be the effect of Mr. Coke's increase, or, if his increase does not prevent such effect, what is the use of it? And to what end have those numerous clubs of wise men been formed, who watch over the agricultural concerns of the country, and one of which clubs, consisting of hard-working farmers (poor fellows!), voted a cup, or a vase, of gold, to be presented to this very Mr. Coke, and of which he accepted? A man of great ambition and small talent will always be, if he be *rich*, at the *head* of something or other. He will always find flatterers amongst either knaves or fools; and, if he cannot purchase flattery from the high, he will continue to descend, till his means meet with a commodity suited to their extent.——Mr. Coke spoke about the taxes which the land had to pay; the poor rates, the property tax. I have, in my last Register but one, shewn the decided advantage which the land-owner has, with respect to the property tax, over the annuitant, the life-holder, the merchant, the tradesman, the lawyer, the doctor, the parson, and every body else except the king, whose money in the funds the Whig ministry exempted from the operation of the property tax. With regard to the poor rates, I have shewn that they fall, as they ought to fall,

upon the *consumers* of the corn, and not upon the cultivator, any more than the paper tax falls upon the paper-makers, or than the stamp tax falls upon the printers of newspapers. But, Mr. Coke went a little further; and counted amongst the *hardships*, which the cultivators of the land had to endure, the existence of *tithes*. To be sure this was paying the *petitioning* clergy in their own coin. I have perceived, that many of the clergy are amongst the *advocates for high prices*. At one of the meetings, a *Reverend* Mr. Somebody was *in the chair*; and, it was resolved, of course, that the admission of sugar into the distilleries would *lessen the value of tithes*. But, here comes Mr. Coke and tells us, that the existence of tithes is itself one of the hardships upon the farmer; one of the checks to cultivation; one of the causes of scarcity; and, of course, one of the things to be got rid of as soon as possible. I should like to see this Reverend petitioner and Mr. Coke face to face, each with his manifesto in his hand. As to the "hardship" it wants no proving, that tithes are no more a hardship than rent is; that the claim of the clergy to the tithes is as good as Mr. Coke's claim to his rent, and of much greater antiquity; that neither the owner of the land nor the cultivator of the land has any just complaint upon this score; and that, as to tithes being a *check to cultivation*, they have existed for a thousand years, and Mr. Young and Mr. Wakefield have amply proved, that for many years, at no very remote period, England was constantly an *exporting* country. Tithes were no check to cultivation then, and why should they be so considered now? There have been, in all times, and under all our forms of religious worship, men who grudged to pay the parson, and these same men grudged, be assured, to pay the landlord, the only difference being that they found the hierarchy more easy to be defrauded than the Squirearchy. A robber seldom is so soon tempted to attack the strong as he is to attack the weak. This is the only reason that I can discover, why a clamour is not set up against rents as well as against tithes; and, this reason becomes conclusive, when we observe, which is universally the case, that where the tithes are impropriate, where they do not belong to the clergy, the collection of them excites no visible discontent. The grey coats pay to one another most cheerfully; but, the moment the black coat puts in its claim, though the claim has no fair foundation except in the black coat, a clamour is set up about hardship and oppression. "Country gentlemen," indeed! Are those worthy of that honourable appellation, who join in this clamour; a clamour flying in the face of our most ancient laws and usages, and also in the face of reason and of justice? The tithes, generally speaking, were set apart by the ancient proprietors of the soil for the maintenance of an order of persons, whose lives should be devoted to the service of the whole of each parish, poor as well as rich. They do not *belong* to those who are now owners or renters of land. They belong to the whole parish, and are put into the hands of one person, that that person may be enabled to devote his time and talents to the teaching of the ignorant, and the comforting of the afflicted. This, then, is an establishment, which, one would think, "the country gentlemen" would vie with each other in cherishing; but, since these clubs of cultivators have been formed in the country, since this new and heretofore unthought of sect has arisen, it has become the fashion to regard as an evil every thing that appears to deduct from the immediate gains of the cultivator. Tithes have this appearance, indeed, to those only whose reasoning faculties are smothered by the little details of cultivation; but, such is the appearance to them, and as their views are confined to the gains of the cultivator, they cry out, of course, against tithes.———Mr. Coke will say, perhaps, that he does not wish to rob the church and the land-less of any portion of their patrimony. He would only *commute* the tithes. But, he would, doubtless, cause the cultivator to *pay less* on account of tithes, than he now pays; for, unless that were the effect, what sense is there in his complaint? And if that were the effect, the church and poor, let the manner be what it might, would experience a robbery.——To a liberal mind, there appears, at the first blush, something so unnatural in this clamour, when coming from the mouths of gentlemen, that room is left for nothing but astonishment. A little reflection, however, shews us, that such persons, having their minds bent solely upon the profits immediately derivable from their lands, cannot bear the idea of a participator. They see clearly enough, that in all the profits of the *farmer* they share; but, they cannot so easily see, that they derive a benefit from the prosperity of the clergy, whom they look upon as joint landlords with themselves, and of whose partnership they are, in proportion to the value they set upon the concern, anxious to get rid.—This anxiety has been fruitful in its invention of arguments; one of which is, that tithes are a discouragement to *improvements*, and that, at any rate, new enclosures should, for some years, at least, be

tithe free. For what? That the capital may be brought from titheable lands, and applied to lands not titheable? In short, that the church and poor may be *cheated*, since they cannot yet be openly *robbed*. The same argument applies to all *improvements*; and you see it frequently stated by writers of creditable talents, that it is *unjust*, that the clergy should come and take the tenth of what is produced by *manure* which the farmer has purchased; just as if those who endowed the several churches with the tenth of the produce of their land; who left, or who sold, their land with that charge upon it; just as if the meaning of these persons was, that the parson's claim should be confined to the tenth of what the land would produce in its *natural state!* As if the tithe were not to be collected upon the capital of the farmer; and, as if the poor farmer, who is unable to manure his land, ought to pay, per acre, as much in tithe as the rich farmer, who is able to manure his land so as to make it produce five times as much! Is there any justice; is there any reason; is there any common sense in this? And, could notions so preposterous ever have been engendered but in minds absorbed in the contemplation of the means of insuring immediate and undivided gain? —— I was vexed, though, I must confess, not much surprized, to perceive, that the observation of Mr. Coke, respecting tithes, escaped unnoticed in the house, where there were so many persons, whose duty it was to have noticed it; and who might have so triumphantly coupled this complaint with the others that he was making. For a thousand years these tithes have been collected; it is allowed, by the agricultural clubbists themselves, that, during part of that time, the land of England has produced so abundantly as to enable the country largely to export corn; it is notorious, that, under the existence of these tithes, this nation has wonderfully flourished, and increased in power; that, from a mere nothing, from a mere island of savages (and she was little better at the time when tithes were first settled), she has become one of the most powerful and most polished nations in the world, leaving all others far behind in the general prevalence of science, and, what is still more, in the wisdom of her civil institutions and in the morality of her people. And yet, we are now, all of a sudden, to be told, that we cannot prosper, unless tithes be abolished; a new sect of cultivators arise, and have the assurance to tell us, that, unless we do away the law of tithes, this most ancient law of English property, England can no longer prosper! And, observe, this they tell us, too, almost in the same breath, that they tell us, that there are "*more farmers than farms*," and that, wherever there is land to be had, there is sure to be a press of capital for its cultivation.——When I have been listening to these complaints against tithes, it has often occurred to me to ask, how it happens, that the laws relating to *manorial* rights remain uncomplained of? Quit rents and fines and heriots are certainly as objectionable as tithes; they are frequently a *real* bar to improvement on the part of the immediate holder; and *all the duties* attached to these rights have, in reality, long ago ceased to be performed. But, these rights are, for the most part, rights of the *Squirearchy*; and, therefore, it is, that we hear no complaint against them.—— These remarks about tithes have, it is true, little to do with the question before us; but, I could not suffer the observation of Mr. Coke to pass unnoticed; and having shewn the groundlessness of his complaint upon this score, may be of service in inducing the reader to examine into the nature of his other complaints. The principle, upon which these agricultural mania men appear to proceed is this: that, as corn is the staff of life, they, who are engaged in the raising of corn, ought to be looked upon as the only part of the community entitled to the protection of the government. They are pleased, modest gentlemen, to regard the properties of the soil and of the climate, and even the blessings of Providence, as the production of their own personal merits. They tell us, that they "*feed* the nation;" and, really, they do seem to consider the rest of us in a light somewhat resembling that of their cattle. But, let them remember, that, if the *land* is exclusively theirs, the air is not, nor the sunshine, nor the rain; and, if they tell us, that the land is *theirs*, we can and ought to tell them, that the air is ours, who are the decided majority. ——Sir John Sinclair's speech affords another instance of the everlasting self-contradiction, into which the corn party fall. In answer to the argument, that the stoppage of importation might produce a scarcity, unless the distilleries were stopped, Sir John said: "that *he hoped*, that we "might *soon have an importation from* "*America*, as we already might from *our* "*own colonies* in the North of America." —— First, as to the *facts*. Mr. Arthur Young has said, in his letters to me, that, as to America, what she can supply us with is scarcely worth naming. And, where did Sir John learn, that "our own colonies in "the North of America were capable of

" doing any thing in this way?" Nova Scotia imports great part of its flour, Indian meal and corn, and even meat, from the United States. So does Newfoundland. New Brunswick cannot send us two ship load of flour in a year; and Canada not ten ship load. All our North American colonies put together are unable to supply themselves with a sufficiency of food. Their whole annual produce, leaving nothing for themselves, would not feed London and Westminster for one day. But, now to the reasoning: why, Sir John, do you *hope* that we shall soon have corn from America? And, what is the difference, Sir John, whether we get corn from America or Sugar from the West Indies to supply the place of corn? I mean, Sir John, what is the difference to the English or Scotch corn-grower? I am very much deceived, Sir John, if you, even with the aid of that magic *straw-pen*, which you sent to Lisle, for the purpose of signing the treaty that was about to be made between England and France, could explain this difference to the satisfaction of any man of common sense. Do you hope for corn from America, because you *know* that it cannot come from thence? From America; from our own colonies in America; *from any place but that which is ready to send us it!* Mr. Wakefield very consistently says, that, if the West Indies could send us corn, he would not let it come; but, you, Sir John, insist, that the importation of sugar to supply the place of corn, would be injurious to the farmers, and yet you hope soon to see corn itself imported from America.—— Mr. Curwen said, that, if the war turned us from commerce to agriculture, it would be a great benefit to the country. Agreed; but, let the thing take place; and, in the meanwhile let us rejoice, that all the alarms of the agricultural clubs have ceased. Don't alarm the people, says Sir Henry Mildmay (who sent his *tenants* to the Winchester meeting, though he had the decency to keep away himself), with a cry of scarcity. There is no signs of approaching scarcity, says Mr. Coke. The scarcity in the Highlands of Scotland (that plentiful country) was temporary, says Sir John Sinclair. There are plenty of potatoes in Ireland, says Sir John Newport. And, do pray observe, reader, that they *all* say, to a man, that the sitting of the committee, in place of *lowering* the price of barley, has *raised* the price. Pray look at my motto once more, and ask yourself then, when we shall hope to see an end of these shocking contradictions?—— In those letters of Mr. Young, to which I so frequently referred in my Register of the 7th instant, that gentleman used the utmost of his endeavours to *alarm* us; but, *then*, his object was to obtain what he regarded as advantages to agriculture. "The Baltic is shut up; America cannot supply us; the ministers may find corn in the moon, perhaps, but I know not where it is to come from in this lower world; we have 'till now imported to the amount of two millions sterling a year; one-seventh part of our food has come from abroad; make haste to do something to get more corn; the effect of a short crop or a week's mildew cannot be contemplated without terror; make haste, then, to get more corn; I do not know very well what to recommend, but make haste, pass a general enclosure bill, let us raise potatoes, get substitutes, I am all in a sweat, taxes, poor-rates, tithes, it is for parliament to decide, but, for heaven's sake, let them dispatch!" Well, the ministers find out a substitute for 300,000 quarters of corn, at once. Here is this substitute already in our hands; and now, behold this gentleman, who was in such a terrible taking to get substitutes; whose very soul was harrowed up at the thought of a short crop, or a week's mildew, knits me up his mouth, and says, that we do not want any substitutes; and that, though the *last year's* crop was a *short* one, corn is still *too cheap* to pay the farmer for growing it; and, so, like the people in the Critic, they say one and all.——Mr. Marryatt gave the public, or me, at least, a piece of information, of which I was not in possession before. The West India colonies were, it is notorious, supplied with great part of their food from the United States of America. Upon the news of the embargo being laid in America, a deputation of the West India merchants waited upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer to ask if corn might be permitted to be sent from this country to the West Indies?" "No," was the answer. "We want all our corn at home, "and more too, seeing that the foreign corn "ports are closed."—"Well then," said the West Indians, "let us bring our sugar here "to be distilled, and to save some of your "corn. Nay, we have got some sugar "*here now*, spoiling in your store-houses; "let that be distilled in place of corn." Nothing could be more reasonable; and would not that minister have deserved a horsewhip, if not a halter, who should have turned a deaf ear to the application, for fear of offending the proprietors of the land? Are you afraid of scarcity, Mr. Young? the West Indies have now in the stores substitutes for 300,000 quarters of corn. Are you afraid of a glut, Mr. Young? The West Indies have a demand for twice 300,000

quarters of corn. And yet, you will not let their sugar be distilled. Both ways, or either way, they are ready to accommodate you; and yet you turn from them with disdain, though you are, at the same time, filled with apprehensions.——Mr. Chute's speech was a very wise one. He asserted, that the opposition to the measure was grounded on the clearest and most solid principles; but, he left those principles to be stated and their solidity to be proved *by others*.——There is one way, which strikes me here, of increasing the quantity of corn, without having recourse to the West Indies, and that is by *cutting down the measure*; but, I shall leave this method to be developed and explained by others.——Mr. Foster said, that, "when there was a bad harvest, "people were always ready to import, and "thus *keep down* the price." If applicable to any thing, this must have been in answer to some one who stated his apprehensions of scarcity; and, if so, it might have been put to Mr. Foster, *whence* those people were *now* to import? Good Lord! when shall we hear an end of these arguments, or, rather, of these shifts and turns?——I have now done with this debate, and should here put an end to my observations, for the present, had I not seen, from the debate of the 23rd instant (which ended with a division, in which the measure had a majority of 36 in its favour), that this has, at last been made a *party* question.——"Mr. Barham," in the debate here referred to, "observed, with surprize, "that this was made a sort of "party question by gentlemen with whom "he commonly acted. They seemed to "think it would be of consequence for "them to beat ministers, even in a question "like this. But did they really suppose, "that a failure in this measure would cause "ministers to change their situations, or "would enable them (the opposition) to "change theirs? It unquestionably would "have no such effect. They would, for "the moment, become the dupes of a set "of men who uniformly voted against them; "who were then laughing in their sleeves at "their credulity; and who the moment they "had gained their end would skip over to "the other side, and by their more than "sedulous and obsequious attendance on "the will of ministers, during the remainder of the session, would endeavour to "atone for their desertion in this single instance, which was dictated solely by "motives of self-interest. There was one "thing, however, connected with this subject, to which he wished to call the attention of the house, and of his right hon. "friend (Mr. Ponsonby). Last night he "had received a letter, at least the letter "was addressed to him, in the same way as "it had been usual to send letters on parliamentary business, conceived in different "shades of earnestness, according to the "urgency of the subject. *In this letter his "attendance was particularly and earnestly "requested in the house of commons this "day, when the sugar business would come "forward; and an early division take place.* "He mentioned this circumstance, conscious "as he was that the letter was in the same "hand-writing as usual, that his right hon. "friend might have an opportunity of explaining the matter. If any person had "presumed to practice an imposture, and "to hold out the recommendation of a "particular measure, where no such recommendation was intended, he consi-"dered it to be a most unwarrantable and "unjustifiable act."——The effect would be precisely that which Mr. Barham describes; and, besides, the *outs*, from this endeavour to take advantage of the division amongst their opponents, would, if the measure were rejected, incur the general hatred of the country, in a greater degree than that in which it is now felt towards them; for, whatever the few may say, whatever clamour they have been able to raise, the country in general is for the measure, and the prevalent opinion is, that the opposition of the land-owners arises solely from a desire *to keep up the price of corn*, and, of course to keep up *their rents*; for, I'll warrant them not to join in the farmers' toast: "Cheap land and dear corn."——I certainly do not recollect an opposition so manifestly founded in self-interest as this opposition has been. The *outs* know well, that, for the votes they have gained upon this occasion, they have to thank mere selfishness; and yet their miserable partizans of the press are endeavouring to give to the thing an air of party triumph.——Mr. Perceval said, in the debate last referred to, that "he was much surprized to find the measure so strenuously opposed by some gentlemen, who, even during the present "session, had applied to him *under the "apprehensions of impending scarcity*." Aye! but that application, I suppose, was accompanied with some agricultural proposition. They wanted to terrify him into a general inclosure bill, a commutation of tithes, or some such fancied good to the owners and cultivators of the land. When they found, that the ministry were to be scared into nothing of this sort, their alarming efforts ceased; and when they found, that a remedy other than that which they would have proposed, had been discovered,

then they opposed it, as a matter of course. ——I trust, that the measure will be carried, not because I think it will be useful as *a preventive of scarcity*, for, I have stated, and any man may satisfy himself of the fact, that the food, which will thereby be saved (exclusive of that which now comes out of the distilleries in food, that is to say, in food for cows and hogs) will amount to no more than 4½d. worth in *a year* to each individual; but, in proportion as the saving of food will be small, will also be small the pretended injury to the farmer and the landowner, while the advantage will be very great to the suffering West India planter; and besides, there will be this peculiar advantage as to *revenue*, that, though a time of scarcity should arise, the revenue from the distilleries will continue to be received in the same manner as if no scarcity existed. I would rather have a *permission* than a *restriction*; but, then, sugar must be released from all *previous* duties. It must start fairly with the barley, or else the permission is nothing.——I perceive, that almost all the newspapers are against the proposed measure; no bad proof of its justice and policy; for, in no one instance do I recollect them to have been unanimous except in favour of some gross error, or delusion. They have often failed; and, I am deceived, if they will not fail now. The trial is between the plain good sense of the country at large and the sophistications of the selfish few. The former has, upon this occasion, had a pretty fair chance, and I have no doubt of its ultimately prevailing. The agriculturalists are become a sect; a combination; an affiliation of clubs; they act in concert, and they are spread all over the country. They have a multitude of scribblers amongst them. They are *schemers* by profession. Their connection with the press is very extensive. All the provincial papers are at their nod. Therefore, if they should be beaten in a contest with the poor, inert, divided West Indians, there will no doubt remain of the badness of their cause. My opinion is, that the agriculturalists have expended, in paragraphs, advertisements, meetings, and the like, in order to carry their point, half as much money as a year's corn, used in the distilleries, is worth; while the West Indians have made scarcely a single effort of the kind. Indeed, they have it not in their power. They have been ruined, absolutely ruined, by the hard measure dealt them by the mother country. They have little more left than the remembrance of those fortunes, which they once enjoyed, and which had descended to them from their ancestors. Mr. Coke, in his agricultural pride, chooses to consider the West Indians as mere speculators; nay, as gambling dealers; but, in what do they differ from him? They are land-owners as well as he; and, as to their slaves, of whom Mr. Chute spoke, I wish with all my heart, that the labourers of Norfolk were fed as well as the labourers in the West Indies, though, if the thing *can be*, I shall certainly be glad to see the blacks as free, in every respect, as the whites. At any rate, it is most unjust and most unmanly to rip up this grievance now. That black slavery exists is not the fault of the West Indians. The fault was that of the mother country, who established the system; and who cannot with justice complain of its existence, without doing it away at once, and *making a full* compensation to the owners of the slaves. Is Mr. Chute ready to contribute his share towards carrying into effect a measure of this sort? If he is not, why does he couple the subject of negro-slavery with that of the distillation of sugar?—— There never was, as far as my observation and recollection serve me, any set of people so ill treated by any government, as the West Indians have been treated by this government. First, they are compelled to purchase all their clothing, and all their manufactures of every description, from the mother country; and, except a little rum and molasses, that they are allowed to exchange with the Americans for food and lumber (which the mother country cannot supply them with), they are compelled to bring the whole of their produce to the mother country, and that, too, in ships belonging to the mother country, while they are, at the same time, compelled to maintain their own internal governments, civil and military, and to have and to pay such governors and officers as the mother country chooses to send to rule them. *Hither* they are compelled to bring their sugar; here they have to pay for their clothing and their household goods; and yet, even at a time, when it is avowed that we are in great danger from a probable scarcity of corn; when it is in evidence, before a committee of the House of Commons, that the last crop was a short one, and that scarcity actually exists in some parts of the kingdom; even at such a time, there is a formidable opposition to the admission of sugar into that sort of manufacture, where it will act as a substitute for corn.——It is now found out by those who joined in abusing me for the doctrine, that *commerce* is of comparatively little value to England. Well, then, let the West Indians go whithersoever they please with their goods; let them sell them to those who are willing to fetch them away

and to supply them with cloathing and other manufactures in return. This would be fair enough; but, to hold them in a tenfold chain of prohibitions, and, at the same time, to treat them as outcasts, is abominably unjust; it is to set at defiance that fundamental maxim, that maxim which is the basis of civil society, namely, that where protection is not yielded, there no allegiance is due.——Mr. Coke asked, what claim the West Indians had to relief better than the Silk Weavers, or persons engaged in any other declining trade? It is not *relief*, that the West Indians, in this measure, ask. They ask for a fair competition for their produce, in that country, *to which they are compelled to bring it.* If the silk-weavers could offer their wares to be used instead of corn, there would be no objection at all to give them the permission; to let silk start fairly with corn. But, there is another point, in which the analogy is deficient. Who is it that suffers principally from the decay in the silk trade? Those who pay *the poor rates.* The labourers in silk are thrown for maintenance upon the nation at large; but the labourers in sugar are to be maintained still, whether they work or not, wholly by the proprietors of the sugar estates. The silk-weavers *are* relieved, and Mr. Coke contributes towards their relief without grumbling; but, he sets his face against any measure of relief to the West Indians. The war throws the silk-weavers out of employment, and they, as they ought to do, come to the nation at large, and are relieved; but, the West India plantations are impoverished by the war too, and we will neither relieve them, nor suffer them to relieve themselves by doing what they would be able to do, namely, carry, or send, their produce to other countries. The silk-weaver may sell his goods *if he can;* he may do what he pleases with them; but, the West Indians must bring their goods hither, whether there be a market for them or not. And, will any man of common discernment and common candour say that the cases are parallel? Will he say that there is any resemblance at all between them? And will any just man deny, that the West Indians are peculiarly entitled to the protection of that government, which holds them and their concerns in such strict and unrelenting subjection?——This hard treatment, however, and all this harsh language, towards the West Indians, is not seen in its proper light, 'till compared with that silent acquiesence, which Mr. Coke and his brother "Country Gentlemen," give to all the lavish grants made to the *East Indians.* He has sitten quietly and seen *three millions* granted to the East India Company, while he ought to know, that that Company is indebted *seven millions* to this abused nation; and he will now, I warrant it, say nothing to oppose a measure, which, as every man of common information must perceive, will lead to the making of the nation answerable for all the thirty or forty millions of debt, which that Company has contracted. If that Company had had sugar to offer us as a substitute for corn, what praises should we have heard the base newspapers bestow upon "our "empire in the East!" The "Country Gen-"tlemen" would not have moved a tongue. If they had dared to do it, the thunder from Leadenhall street would soon have reduced them to silence. Mr. Coke thinks nothing of seeing the whole nation taxed to support these *real* speculators; and even to pay their *pension list,* which amounts to a great many thousands in a year. Was there ever such a thing as this heard, or dreamt of, before? A Company of Merchants having a national debt and a pension list, and calling upon the nation to defray the expense? Yet, against this Mr. Coke says not one word, though he talks about the taxes that oppress agriculture; just as if the land did not pay part, at least, of the enormous sums granted to the East India Company.——But, the cause of this difference is, that the East Indians act in a body; they have their Court of Directors; they take care to expend the money we give them in such a way as to have friends in the right place; they have the daily press under their control, in consequence of the use of those means, which they know so well how to employ.——This subject is now exhausted. I think, one may defy the ingenuity of man to find out any thing new to be said upon it. Some miserable cavil, or some precious absurdity, unworthy of notice, may still make its appearance; but, on one side or the other, the mind of the nation is made up; and, therefore, though with anxious wishes for its success, I shall leave the measure to its fate.

CURATES' BILL.——This bill has now passed the House of Commons; and, though it does not guard against the *possible* negligence, or which is worse, partiality of the Bishops, it will have some effect in the way of correcting the evil and the scandal of non-residence. But, I perceive, that it takes no notice of curates under *lay-impropriations.* These livings are in the hands of private persons; but, I see no reason why they should not be made to contribute towards the maintenance of the curates, who reside upon them. The College of Maynooth has friends in abundance, and,

apparently, very zealous friends; and, a provision is talked of for the chaplains of the navy; but, not a word is said about curates under lay-impropriators. I hope, that these gentlemen will be considered, upon some future occasion; and not only them but *their parishioners*; for, if the church be of *use*, it is the parishioners who are the greatest sufferers in the misapplication of means for supporting that church.

WESTMINSTER ELECTION.——On Monday, the 23d instant, the anniversary of Sir Francis Burdett's election for Westminster was celebrated at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in that city.——The newspapers have given an account of the proceedings, and particularly of a speech made by the Baronet himself, in which speech he strenuously insists upon the necessity of restoring the House of Commons to what it formerly was, and what the laws and usages, which comprize what is called the constitution (if it be not a mere sound), require that that House should now be; that is to say, an assemblage of gentlemen, freely elected by the people, the real objects of their choice, and the faithful guardians of their property and their liberties. In his opinion respecting this necessity, every day's observation convinces me that Sir Francis Burdett is right; and, I am persuaded, that, if the nation were polled, leaving out those who have an interest in corruption, there would appear a majority of a thousand to one in favour of the reform, which he recommends, and which, in their better days, had been recommended by Mr. Pitt and Mr. Wilberforce.——Look well at the evils we endure, and that we apprehend. Trace them back to their cause; and you will find them all meeting at this one point: a House of Commons elected as it now is. I have at this moment before my eyes, an article in the Morning Chronicle, strongly and truly stating the encroachments upon the liberty of every man, which must take place, if the new assessed tax bill pass. Well, it will pass, nevertheless; and what is the cause? So of every other such measure.—— Sir Francis well observed, that, in the present state of things, it was in vain to wish for pure and upright ministers; for, that it would be impossible for them to act according to the dictates of their own minds. A minister may desire to do that which is for the good of the country; he may have an anxious desire to promote its happiness (and, his errors aside, I do think that Mr. Perceval is such a man); but, before he can stir an inch he has the feelings and interests of the borough mongers to consult; he has party to counteract and faction to mollify. How much more at his ease must such a man feel; what a load would be removed from his mind, if he could step into a House of Commons, freely chosen, and having no object in view but that of agreeing to what they thought good, and opposing what they thought bad? A House of Commons, in which there would be no strife for office or emolument, and in which nine times out of ten truth would prevail.——Whoever takes time to contemplate the situation of a minister of the king, at the present day, must perceive, that those hours and those talents, which ought to be devoted to the service of the country; to giving the king wholesome advice; to the receiving of information; to the forming of plans; to the performing, in short, of all his great and numerous duties; those hours and those talents will be found all taken up in preparing for, and carrying on, battles in the House of Commons, in order to insure success in which battles (and success *must* be insured), those means must be made use of which are ruinous to the country.——From one evil to another we gradually have come, 'till, at last, it is a question, whether we shall be the conquered slaves of France, or not. If we are not, the prevention must finally come from the will of the people at large; it being quite farcical to talk of defending a people without their own voluntary co-operation. And, to have this will, there must be a motive in the people. They must be convinced, not by paragraphs in the COURIER about "our glorious constitution," but by their *feeling*, that they have real liberty and happiness to contend for; for unless they have this conviction, it is infatuation bordering upon insanity to expect them to lift a hand in their country's defence.——Whether such a change, as Sir Francis Burdett describes, will ever take place may be a question; but, unless it does, all the schemes of defence will, when the hour of real danger comes, prove ineffectual. They will, indeed, be worse than nothing; and we shall fall without even a desire to stand, as has been the case with so many other kingdoms.——The people of Westminster, however, will have done *their* part. If England be enslaved, the fault will not be theirs. But, they *alone* can do little. There must be a corresponding spirit through the country at large; and there will be, unless England be doomed to add to the long list of the conquests of Napoleon.

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